BlueUrban Methodology Workshop
Universitas Indonesia, SKSG – June 2, 2022

ROUNDTABLE 1: TRANSCRIBING QUAL. INTERVIEWS

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BLUEURBAN

Towards Blue Urbanism for Sea Level Change Adaptation: Global Trajectories and Speculative Futuring in Island Southeast Asia
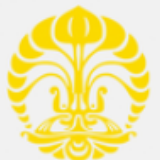
A German Science Foundation (DFG) funded SPP initiative "Regional Sea Level Change and Society" (Phase II)

Universität Bremen*   *Leibniz*
Leibniz-Gemeinschaft   ZMT   UNIVERSITAS INDONESIA
Veritas, Probitas, Iustitia

Human civilisational history and transcription

Earliest forms…oral history, royal scribes, funerary rites/tombs, religious instruction...

"A transcript is basically the text version of an oral interview, written out word-for-word. Transcription is the process whereby a transcript is created. And within those two definitions, there is a whole world of complication. " (Eidinger 2019)

https://www.unwrittenhistories.com/an-introduction-to-oral-history-transcripts-and-transcription/

Your ideas….

Ida – transcripts as administrative; standardized…

Accounting for the sheer diversity…

Muthi: Put all the information down, very detailed documentation, like pauses…Sensitive stories, e.g. domestic violence.
Providing context, including expressions, and gestures.

Iqbal: three different documents…transcriptions were verbatim (spoken contents about the interview). Narrative info in fieldnotes.
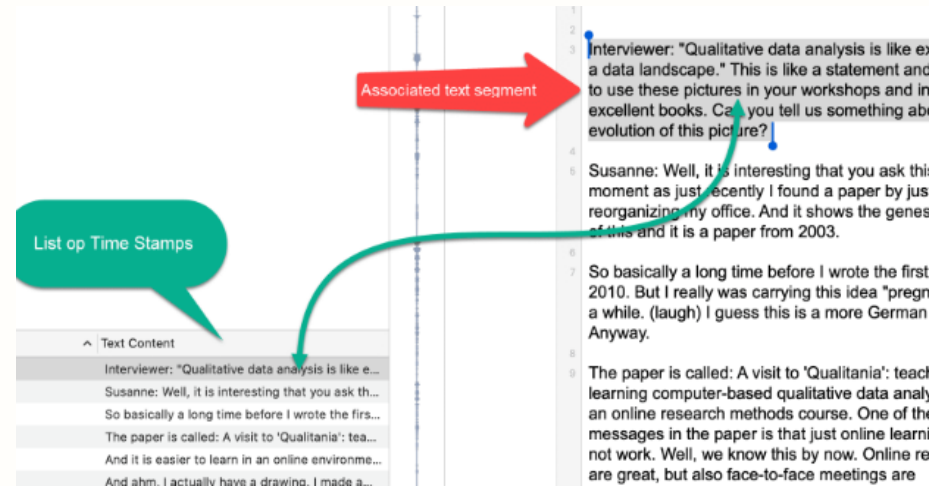
Ida: Putting down the context…

Ways of thinking about transcription

"*Transcription as method...*"

Lapadat and Linsay (1999)

- Rethinking the linearity of process (i.e. recording, transcribing, coding, analysis etc.);

- Move away from 'standarisation' to context and reflexivity;

- Transcription itself as theory-laden because it rests on epistemological assumptions ;

- Act of transcription as language interaction – *"Each researcher makes choices about whether to transcribe, what to transcribe, and how to represent the record in text...."*

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Ways of thinking - transcription

Transcription as theory

Elinor Ochs (1979)

http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/anthro/faculty/ochs/articles/ochs1979.pdf (open access)

- Transcription in child language acquisition (linguistic anthropology)

- Organisation of page; paralinguistic and non verbal communication cues; placement of verbal and non-verbal behaviour etc.

- Mechanical devices do not preclude observational decisions

…..."*the transcriptions are the researchers' data*" and that "*transcription is a theoretical process reflecting theoretical goals and definitions*" (p. 44).

Ways of thinking - transcription

==Transcription as interpretative constructions and representational process ….==

"Different transcripts are constructs of different worlds, each designed to fit our particular theoretical assumptions and to allow us to explore their implications. . ." – Mishler (1999)

Kvale (1996) –Transcription is always a 'translation'

-   Boundaries of recording; audio and/or visual; angles and framing;

-   Data analysis as beginning from the time of transcription

-   Transcription was an "impoverished basis for interpretation" (artificial constructs, oral discourse does not translate into text so unproblematically…).

Forms of transcription

Hybrid choices – no singular method

- Captures what is being said, with false starts, grammatical inconsistencies; repetitions; yet ambient sounds documented for context

- Cleaner feel as it removes ambient noises, fillers as "unnecessary" detail

- BEWARE: what is considered unnecessary…?)

Standard Verbatim Transcription

Interviewee: XXX
Interviewer: XXX
Date of Interview: mm.dd.yy
Location of Interview: XXX
List of Acronyms: FP=Frank Peterson, IN=Interviewer

[Begin Transcript 00:00:10]

IN: So what was going on in your life when you joined the Marines?

FP: Well when I joined the navy, actually that was in 1950 at the age of 18. Not much other than the fact that I wanted to get away from Topeka and see what the rest of world was really all about.

IN: Um-hm.

[00:00:26]

Indianscribes.com

Hybrid choices – no singular method

True verbatim

- The most detailed

- Captures as much detail including ambient sounds (registered)

- Non-verbal communication including laughs, coughs, lengths of pauses/silences; fillers like you know…uhm…

[00:00:26]

And of course having uh... gone through the uh flight training I received my uh wings and commission uh in October of uh 1952. And the- one of the reasons I uh opted for the Marines, I knew there had never been a black pilot in the Marine Corps. So I wanted to uh see if I could achieve that goal, which I was able to do.

And then my first duty assignment would have been in Cherry Point, North Carolina. But I'd had enough of the South and decided I wanted to stay away from the South if I possibly could, so Headquarters Marine Corps, at my request, uh changed my orders to El Toro, El Toro, California.

But what I didn't realize is that I'd jumped from the frying pan into the fire because El Toro was the training base for replacement pilots in Korea. So I jumped from the frying pan into the Korean War via El Toro [laugh].

IN: I see [laugh].

[End Transcript 00:01:21]

Hybrid choices – no singular method

'Cleaned' verbatim

- Print-ready transcript editing out grammatical inconsistencies;

- Paraphrasing

- Removal of false starts, repetitions, fillers etc..

IN: Um-hm.

[00:00:26]

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IN: I see.

[End Transcript 00:01:21]

Brief Guidelines - 1 (adapted from Peraza 2019)

1. Documenting all **transcriptions via an inventory (if helpful) – contains metadata** like interviewers' reference details, important content for later analysis (with exact audio time/location 05.67); incl. dates of transcription and transcribers' name/s;

2. Play the recording and adjust the speed of sound (.e.g. .5x-6x) to allow for slower typing; use of space key for pausing;

3. Agreed upon abbreviations for common occurrences:
    Words with sound/meaning unclear
    Disruption in quality with ambient n

4. Use of colour tags if helpful

5. Basic info captured at the beginning Of each transcription (identities of Interviewees recorded at this point); - Data confidentiality

File Keys

No dot = Needs to be transcribed and checked
🔴 = Transcribing in progress
🔵 = Transcribing completed
🟡 = Checking in progress
🟠 = Checking completed
🟣 = Checking by transcriber in progress
🟢 = Transcription and checking complete

Time	Kind of data	Data source	Focus
Year 1	Writings exploring language, culture, identity, & teaching	Personal language inventory Privileges inventory Cultural autobiography poem Visual identity journey Essay placing self in sociopolitical context	Self-reflexive inquiry into language, culture, & identity; linguistic repertoire; ways to leverage resources for use in language teaching
	Survey responses	Survey on language history Survey on language ideologies	Language history & ideologies
	Observations of undergraduate in-class practice	PowerPoint (Ppt) presentation on idioms (co-presented) Email messages & informal chats	Emerging interests in language & its teaching
Year 2	Interview	Audio and transcribed interview	Teaching context & experiences, how her own language experiences shaped ideas on instructional activities involving language
	Instructional artifacts	Photos & student work samples	Language teaching & learning
	Preservice Ppt on classroom inquiry	Ppt slides and notes	Inquiry into questions about student learning & challenges
Year 3	Inservice Ppt on classroom inquiry	Ppt slides, inquiry assignments (lit review, methods memos), executive summary, poster presentation	Inquiry into questions about student learning & challenges
	Observations of teaching (January and May)	Audio & fieldnotes of teaching	Language teaching & learning
		Classroom artifacts (photos of posters, student work samples directly related to what is observed)	Language teaching & learning
	Interviews (January & May)	Semi-structured interviews: 2 pre-observation, 2 post-observation; 1 focused on MA inquiry project	Ideas as she develops students' language & literacy; problem-solving; connections to resources, what is shaping pedagogical decisions
	Email correspondences	Participant-initiated emails	Reflections/connections between resources & practices

Wong et al. (2012) „Developing as an agentive bilingual teacher"

Brief Guidelines – 2 (adapted from Peraza 2019)

1. Decisions to be made: tabular or white space document
   Line numbering if necessary?
   Use of indented lines

For e.g.
0.25" for responses to the main question, 0.50" for each sub-question, and 0.75" for each response to the sub-question. See example below

I: What was your favourite subject in high school?

P: *Well, I liked both math and history.*
   I: Can you tell me more about the subjects you liked?
      P: *Yes, math wasn't easy for me, but I had a teacher that made it simple.*

For group interviews, more linear…

- Documenting exactly what they say, even if grammatically incorrect (e.g. "cuz" instead of "because"
- Add identifying information…. *"I asked her _____ (cousin) to accompany me.."*

Ethics, challenges, and hacks…

Creating an 'Analytical Product'

Recall this example from Marcyliena Morgan's book *Speech Communities*, p. 94

Transcripts as analytical product: The first step at data analysis starts at transcription stage!
For more
https://www.reed.edu/anthro/201/transcription.html

Transcription always a selective process….being aware of theoretical, political, ethical implications

Irma Washington (IW); Judy Murray (JM); Marcyliena Morgan (MM):

1 IW: Ok ((laughs)) I went to the average teenage dance ((laughs)) OK but
2   they – we, we did have a center on 19th and Archer. And every
3   weekend we would have dances there. (.3) Then a few OTHER
4   times ? we would sneak out?
5 MM: What were the names of some of the places you went to?
6 IW: Crown Propeller, was one. And, ((laughs)) and let's see it was one,
7   one called – I think it was the Peps – 48th Street.
8 MM: That's for dancing right? They danced a lot there?
9 IW: Yeah. That was it!
10 JM: What did you think of the Peps?
11 IW: Wi::::ld. That's where – that was my style. Wi:::ld. It was always
12   crowded. You know, it was nice, it was nice. That's where all the
13   high school kids went.
14 MM: So you never went to the Peps? ((to JM, who shakes her head))
15 IW: Na::w? ((looking at JM)) How you miss that? ((looking at MM)) And she
16   living right in the HEART of the city.
17 JM: My mother wouldn't LET me go!
18 IW: DIDN'T YOU HEAR ME SAY we was SNEAKING out?

Irma Washington responds to the question about going to jazz clubs by framing her statement in line 1 *"I went to the average teenage dance"* with laughter that provides an explanation for why she's laughing. Although she does not come forward with the full details about her excursions into the jazz scene, Irma Washington does acknowledge that – at times – she would sneak out to attend dances (line 4). And after naming a few more of her favorite dance clubs, she laughs again and names another club (lines 6–7). Her friend Judy Murray is present during the interview, yet she is surprisingly silent and does not confirm anything her friend is saying. Instead, in line 10 Judy Murray asks Irma Washington what she thought of Peps, and she responds:

Reflective Transcription

==Transcription phrase as one of the most important and creative parts of an interview process...==

Rapti's fieldnotes (2012)

No perfect and 'final' transcrip only different and revised versions depending on the purpose and audience

Capturing insights during transcription process:

 - As comments bubbles/separate column
 - Further questions to explor about the topic/or follow-up questions for the same people;
 - Other 'splintering' ideas for for further study/exploratior etc...

R: What do you except from your cooperative?

M: We would like to get our resources from the cooperative - anything that could put this village in some working order.

Muru took us for a walkabout - towards the lagoon. A motorboat was parked and another was fishing yonder. He explained saying that most of the fishers that came to the lagoon were Muslim and Sinhalese from Pulmoddai. He said that they had spoken several times and even got permission to park their boats in by his lagoon. When asked if they shared any of their resources etc. he said "no."
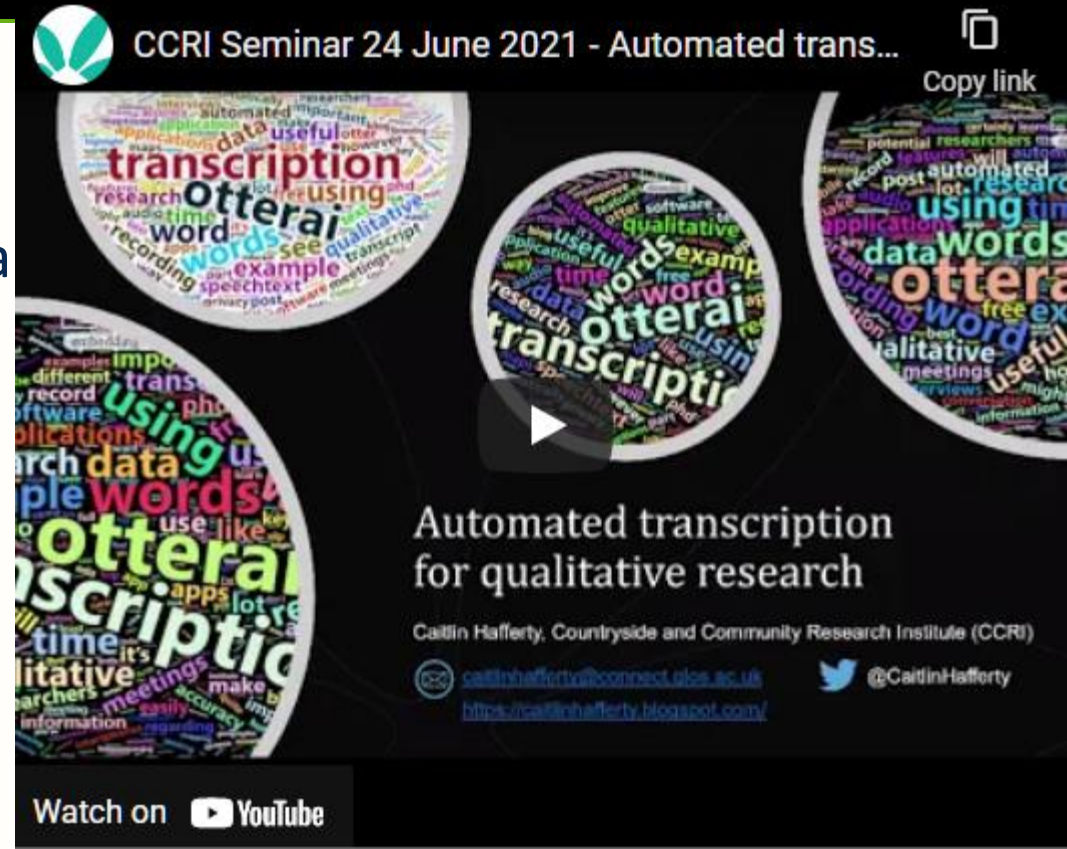
Note the relationship between Muru and the Pulmoddai fishers. Is it wealth and the inability to practice one's livelihood to the fullest that makes the 'giving' more unequal?
Also -trajectories of multiple displacement: **were new networks forged**, particularly as people went from place to place?
The Thanamaravadi also serves as a good case-study to show how after **disruptions, community life begins again albeit with some serious challenges.** Basic necessities for one, but also explore mental maps about the past, present and the future. Remember Ernst Renan's quotation about the past as being a different country. Nostalgia seems to play a big role here in re-creating a sense of community from the ashes.
Also explore the role of the **new cooperative** - mark its development in terms of the making of a new institution, their hopes for it, how decisions are made etc. We are to be invited for the inaugural meeting. What does a cooperative symbolize? What are its interests - and how does it differ from the interests of different individuals and the roles that they play?

Further discussion – automated trans.

- Accuracy and reliability?
- Distances you from stories a[...]
  insights?
- What is gained and lost?

Otter – AI

E.g. https://otter.ai/

Automated Transcription for Qualitative Research webinar (Caitlin Hafferty)

To watch https://caitlinhafferty.blogspot.com/2021/07/practical-and-ethical-considerations-for-automated-transcription.html

Further discussion

Thank you!